

THE CALIFORNIA STATE WATER PROJECT

As the nation's largest state-built water and power system, the California State Water Project was developed to help solve California's water dilemma: moving supplies from areas of abundance to places of need, in an environmentally sensitive way.

Lake Oroville, considered the official start of the SWP, stores water for use by 29 public agencies with long-term contracts for annual water deliveries. The lake also provides local water supplies, flood control, recreation, wildlife enhancement, and power. Power is generated by three hydroelectric power plants, one of which is Hyatt Powerplant excavated from bedrock beneath the lake.

Water released from the lake travels down the Feather River, into the Sacramento River, then enters the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta, where fresh water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers mixes with saline water from the Pacific Ocean. Some of the water, released from Lake Oroville, is used to maintain water quality standards in the Delta. Water from the Delta is also pumped into the North Bay Aqueduct (serving Napa and Solano counties) and the California Aqueduct.

Water in the California Aqueduct flows through a system of pumping and power plants; lakes and reservoirs; and 660 miles of canals, pipelines, and tunnels. The SWP delivers water to South Bay counties (via South Bay Aqueduct), the San Joaquin Valley (the state-federal San Luis Complex and the California Aqueduct), the Central Coast (Coastal Branch), and Southern California (East and West Branches).

SWP water supplements its contracting agencies' local agricultural and urban water supplies, which can include surface water, groundwater, and imported sources. These public agencies have paid for the construction of SWP facilities and pay for its operations and maintenance.

The Project has delivered more than 60 million acre-feet (1 acre-foot equals 325,900 gallons) since deliveries began in 1962, with annual deliveries averaging about 2 to 2.5 million acre-feet.



For more information call the Department of Water Resources at 1-800-272-8869. Map above created originally for the "California State Water Project Atlas."